



AUDIT COMMITTEE – 6TH NOVEMBER 2013

SUBJECT: WALES AUDIT OFFICE PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVEMENT PROGRESS UPDATE

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES & S151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update members on progress against the proposals made by the Wales Audit Office since the last Audit Committee update that was provided on the 17th September 2013.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The previous report detailed all the outstanding proposals as at September 2013. Since that time a number of historical proposals have now been addressed and new ones have come onto the list from recently received regulator reports. It was decided for the purposes of this report to split the register into Appendix A (historical proposals) and Appendix B (new proposals received).
- 2.2 The purpose of this is to ensure there is an accurate picture of how the backlog is being addressed and to draw a line under the historical proposals. Going forward this will enable a more accurate assessment and understanding of new proposals as they are made.
- 2.3 Below is a statistical summary of the position against the number of proposals.

Appendix A Summary

Historical Proposals	From the AIR 2013 (repeating 2 previously made proposals)	Sub total	Proposals approaching Completion <i>From Octobers Performance Publication.</i>	Considered closed and waiting confirmation from WAO	Final total outstanding for historical proposals
27	2	29	13	10	6

Appendix B Summary – NEW proposals

AIR 2013 * 2 of the 3 repeat /emphasis need to act on previous proposals	Customer Services Review (August 2013)	Asset Management (Land and Property) Strategy Review (September 2013)	Evaluation of Social Services contribution to MTFP (September 2013)	Information Management Review (November 2012)	Review of Management Arrangements following a Homicide Report from Healthcare Inspectorate Wales – April 2013	Data Quality Review	Total
3 *	10	10	6	10	6	3	48

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 Both the Corporate Assessment and the AIR are designed to assess and report on the Council's compliance with the Local Government Measure 2009. In addition it encapsulates other regulatory and inspection outcomes.

4. THE REPORT

4.1.1 Since the last time the proposals were reported the following progress and changes have been made:

4.1.2 The action plan has been checked to ensure there is no duplication between the Improving Governance Programme (IGP) proposals for Improvement and where appropriate some outstanding proposals have been moved across to the IGP action plan to be monitored by the board.

4.1.3 The action plan has been checked against the Annual Improvement Report (AIR) 2013 to ensure all remaining new and outstanding proposals are captured in one register. As a result some new proposals have been added.

4.1.4 Some of the new proposals are very recent from when the final report was received and services are working on their action plans to address these new proposals, this means some of those actions are not available for this current update to Audit committee, although they will be completed and reported on for the next monitoring session.

4.1.5 Corporate Management Team (CMT) agreed on the 19th September 2013 that all future draft reports with officer feedback go through the CMT process in the first instance before becoming final. This will ensure there is an opportunity to discuss the suggested proposals either giving support or challenging their viability before the report is finalised. This will provide the Audit Committee with additional reassurance that proposals have been reviewed and where necessary challenged within CMT with regard to their costing, value and ability to make a difference to the topic area.

4.1.6 As noted previously several proposals refer to the publication of performance information. The WAO have started their audit work on our publication (called the Performance Assessment) and if satisfied the proposals have been addressed they can be closed down. The WAO in their Improvement Assessment Letter (due approx Dec 2013) will give a position statement as to which proposals they have closed down and which they believe remains outstanding.

- 4.1.7 When monitoring progress against the proposals, members are advised to consider what value the proposals are making and what difference the activity in addressing them has made for our citizens in creating more efficient, customer focused services.
- 4.1.8 This report does not include an update against the Improving Governance Programme, as this will be reported separately.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 No specific Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken on this report, however the Local Government Measure 2009 cites fairness and accessibility as part of a definition of what 'Improvement' means.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report although it is worth noting that External Audit fees could be reduced, if they can be assured and place reliance on the organisation's own ability to monitor and challenge itself to improve.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 There have been no consultations that have not been included in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that Audit Committee note the contents of this report and monitor the progress against the attached action plan.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure members are aware of progress the Council's action plan and have an opportunity to monitor and challenge its content.

11. STATUTORY POWER

- 11.1 Local Government Measure (Wales) 2009.

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Appendices:

Appendix A Historical Actions progress update of WAO outstanding proposals
Appendix B Action plan for new proposals